



United States Congress

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
November 13, 2006

Craig (208) 342-7985
Otter (208) 336-9831

HOUSE SENDS FOOTHILLS BILL TO PRESIDENT

Idaho land exchange measure wins final Congressional approval

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously gave final congressional approval on Monday to legislation consolidating public land holdings in Idaho while preserving more open space in the Boise Foothills.

The **Idaho Land Enhancement Act, S. 1131**, sponsored by Senator Larry Craig, now goes to President Bush to be signed into law. Congressman C.L. “Butch” Otter sponsored companion legislation in the House, H.R. 2718.

The concept for the bill developed after Boise voters’ May 2001 approval of a tax to pay for securing open space in the Boise Foothills. The Idaho Land Enhancement Act was drafted with the help of city, state and federal officials, as well as representatives of conservation groups. It enables the City of Boise to work with the State of Idaho and federal land management agencies to set aside additional Foothills open space while consolidating public land holdings in North Idaho.

“The bottom line is that some scattered parcels of federal land will be easier to manage, Idaho’s State Endowment Fund will get some valuable timberland to benefit our schoolchildren, and the people of Boise will be able to keep enjoying one of the signature elements of the city’s quality of life,” **Congressman Otter** said. “Everyone benefits. This is the way government is supposed to work.”

“This just plain makes sense,” **Senator Craig** agreed. “We conserve the unique value of the Foothills and consolidate holdings around the state – enabling land managers to be more efficient. It represents a collaborative effort at conservation that will be law shortly.”